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International Women's Day in Whapmagoostui

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editorial

The blockade effect

by Steve Bonspiel

The word blockade is most often associated with disgruntled Native groups who are getting nowhere through the usual channels of negotiating with the government, or in the form of a court case snaking its way through the painfully slow judicial process.

Recently, forestry company Chantiers Chibougamau and its supporters from Chibougamau, including the mayor, set up a protest in the form of a blockade to raise awareness to their plight. They were concerned about a decrease in their wood allocation as a direct result of the Paix des Braves Agreement, signed in 2002.

Although dialogue is a much-preferred method of getting a point across, blockades serve a purpose.

That is not to say Chantiers Chibougamau and its supporters were right or wrong, but it is something they felt they needed to do.

One problem that arises in situations like this is the sudden limited access the community has to things like medication, food, water and other necessities.

Two of the most famous Native blockades occurred in the 1990's, when Aboriginal people, frustrated at losing more of their land yet again, set up shop on their ancestral territory to protect what little they had left.

In 1995 at Ipperwash Provincial Park in Ontario, peaceful protestors from the Stony and Kettle Point bands demanded their land back. It had been taken illegally by the federal government during World War II, serving first as an army base and then a park.

They erected a peaceful "sit-in" at the entrance to the park to raise awareness of their plight. The media coverage they received was large enough to help their cause, but Ontario Premier Mike Harris and his Conservative government would not budge.

An aide close to Harris later testified in the Ipperwash inquiry that Harris shouted, behind closed doors of course, that they needed to "Get the f*cking Indians out of the park!"

At the end of the standoff, unarmed protestor Dudley George was shot and killed by officer Kenneth Deane, part of the Ontario Provincial Police SWAT team, who claimed he mistook George's tree branch he was holding for a rifle.

Deane was convicted of criminal negligence causing death and given a light sentence. He never served one day in jail. He later died in an unrelated car accident.

Probably the most famous and the most influential blockade of the modern era happened in 1990 in Kanesatake Mohawk Territory. Mohawks gathered in the area known as "the Pines" to stop the town of Oka's planned expansion of its nine-hole golf course over a Mohawk cemetery.

It was a poorly planned project with blatant disregard for Mohawk rights. Sûreté du Québec police corporal Marcel Lemay was shot and killed by an undetermined bullet and what became known as the Oka crisis lasted a long and arduous 78 days.

It is important to note that police stormed the peaceful barricades, shooting, hurling tear gas and firing bullets at unarmed men, women and children.

That land is still in question to this day as negotiations have stalled.

Erecting a blockade usually involves a land dispute, but Chantiers Chibougamau put its up for access to wood, money and jobs. It is a method Aboriginals can relate to.

Aboriginal people have always adapted and evolved with the constant changes in our lives. We don't have nearly as much land or resources as we once did so we fight for what we have left.

Instead of pointing the finger at those erecting the blockades it is important to take a step back and figure out why.

The Canadian government put us in the position we are in and the only thing that seems to pay immediate dividends is to block access to a small parcel of land to get attention.

We are running out of land for the future generations and that is the major reason why this relatively new tactic is so vital.

Maybe now that more and more non-Natives are using the last-ditch effort of barricading the roads to get their point across will it give added respect to Aboriginal protestors and their plight that all too often falls on deaf ears.

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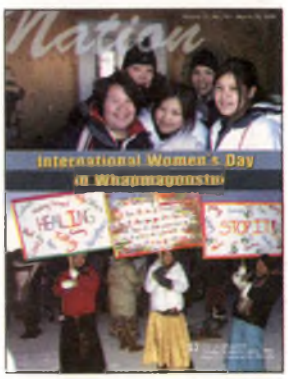

photo:
Sonny Orr

International Woman's Day Rocks

by Sonny Orr

A nurse popped into my office one cold winter day and asked whether I was interested about writing a story for *the Nation* covering the events of International Woman's Day in Whapmagoostui. She went on to explain that the women and the social leaders of the community had a vision they wanted to present to the community, a vision so powerful that people would actually think about it for some time after.

Come Saturday morning, the cold exterior was punctuated once in a while by women in skirts, slowly winding their way up the hill to the culture camp, a place that is often used in Whapmagoostui. It's a place that represents our past, present and future, all in a variety of buildings. It's a reminder of the days when everyone had a role in society.

I showed up at the dedicated time to discover that the main hall was jam-packed with women of all ages eager to learn and review old things and to plan new projects. The opening ceremonies indicated that this day was not just a day to celebrate but also to work at opening minds and easing "uncomfortable" issues into the venue, into an arena of hard-working women, to be examined and discussed, until a solution comes out of this process to deal with issues that plague women today.

These issues were difficult to deal with as they included the abuse women endure, the roles of motherhood and early pregnancies, of alcohol and drug abuse, of neglect and of the changing role of women, from household labourers and caretakers to income earner and main supporter of the family and home.

Children were of upmost concern, the apparent problems and issues related to children of all ages, neglect and impoverishment, malnutrition and of course, carrying on the family traditions, whether they be good or bad. The system of caring for children doesn't seem to work well enough to counter the effects of a poor childhood and the cycle of abuse continues, to be carried on by children into the next generations.

These powerful women have decided to do something about the past and present situations and call attention to the plight of women and children throughout the world. After the session at the camp, after the sun went down, a solemn and dedicated line of future supporters slowly winded their way back to the youth centre, about a mile away, carrying torches, glow-sticks and signs. The line of lights was impressive enough to attract many more people, 160 people were counted at the camp alone and twice as many showed up at the youth centre, where demonstrations of a new community vision appeared.

The present situation was described as normal Cree anarchy. There was a number of lines of people composed of varying degrees of authority and community stature. The leaders were up front, the teachers and nurses behind, then parents and finally the children. Everyone looked in one direction and now the children could not be seen and directed to lead a proper life. Knowing this instinctively the children traipsed around all lines of authority, completely out of control and no one could contain them long enough to guide them in the right direction.

The new vision was quickly acted out, where all the authorities and adults turned around and circled the children. The perceived authorities gathered outside circle, the family and parents in the inner circle and finally, the children contained (and under control) in the center. No matter how hard they tried, no child could break out and cause trouble or harm themselves in any way. After awhile, a child would grow into the inner circle, then eventually (if they chose and with the right direction) the outer circle, and maybe then they could get the chance to break free and become a free radical, but only after learning good values.

It seems to me that the future is beginning to look a lot brighter for many families, women and children.

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Chantiers Chibougamau erects Route 167 blockade

Paix des Braves cited as major reason for logging restrictions

By Steve Bonspiel

The Paix des Braves Agreement is being called into question by forestry company Chantiers Chibougamau as it held a protest blocking Route 167 in mid-March. A looming cut in wood allocation had protestors citing the 2002 Quebec-Cree deal as the primary reason for their troubles.

The blockade was erected on March 10 by Chantiers Chibougamau and supporters, including Chibougamau Mayor Donald Bubar, fearing a 60% cut in the amount of wood allocated to them by April 1 under their current agreement.

"We don't have a problem with the Paix des Braves," Rejean Girard, spokesman for the Groupe d'action pour la sauvegarde de Chantiers Chibougamau, told *the Nation*.

"One thing I would say is, it was an agreement signed between the Québécoise and the Cree Nation, but it was signed for all Quebecers. So what we ask is that the forestry companies that fall under the Paix des Braves territory share with all the forestry companies in Quebec."

Girard, along with hundreds of Chibougamau residents and forestry workers, stood fast on Route 167, only allowing cars and light trucks through, thus reducing the flow of transport vehicles and supplies to Mistissini.

"We want the (Quebec) minister (of Natural Resources) to come see us and guarantee us that our supply won't be reduced on the first of April and that we are also guaranteed a fair share of forestry. We want an immediate response," he said.

At one point on March 13, Sûreté du Québec police threatened to take down the illegal barricades. It caught the protestors by surprise because for the three days previous there was no mention of the blockade being illegal.

Mistissini Chief John Longchap was in constant contact with Chibougamau Mayor Donald Bubar throughout the ordeal.

"I don't agree with these people using the Paix des Braves as a reason for the blockade," said Chief Longchap. "We have allocations that were given to Mistissini through the Paix des Braves. We also have allocations that we harvested on an annual basis that have gone to Chantiers."

"So whatever they lost as a result of the different modalities under the forestry regime of the Paix des Braves, they've been able to compensate from what we feed their mill. It's not quite accurate in my opinion. The right picture is not being presented to the public."

Longchap admitted the U.S. market slowdown was also hurting the Chantiers Chibougamau company, but he feared for the well-being of his community.

"I think they should open the highway for the safety of the people," he said. "We're getting concerned for the welfare of our people. Medical supplies need to get through to those who depend on their medication."

"There has to be a better way than a blockade for Chantiers to achieve what they're trying to achieve," he said. "There has to be other ways for them to get more wood allocation but it doesn't make sense to us to cut everyone's throats; they're cutting their own throats by stopping their own supplies."

On March 14, the group received an answer from the Quebec Premier's office, saying that it would bypass Natural Resources Minister Claude Bechard and sit down to directly negotiate with Chantiers Chibougamau. The blockade was lifted shortly thereafter.

"We're hopeful that we can come to a solution now," said Chibougamau Mayor Donald Bubar.

"Chantiers Chibougamau is prepared to do its part, but it shouldn't have to pay more than other forestry companies."

Mayor Bubar said that when the Paix des Braves was signed in 2002, Chantiers Chibougamau lost its harvesting territory of Saguenay-Lac St. Jean. The new rules under the Paix des Braves meant Chantiers had to adhere to cutting in a mosaic fashion in a larger percentage of its allotted area than it has had to in the past, reducing its allocation.

"Our logging company should not have to bear the brunt of restrictions," Bubar said of Chantiers Chibougamau, which, he added, uses "the entire tree with little or no loss."

Bubar did not see the blockade as a problem for Mistissini, but certain truck drivers, including an Ultramar gas truck driver, refused to go in on their own accord.

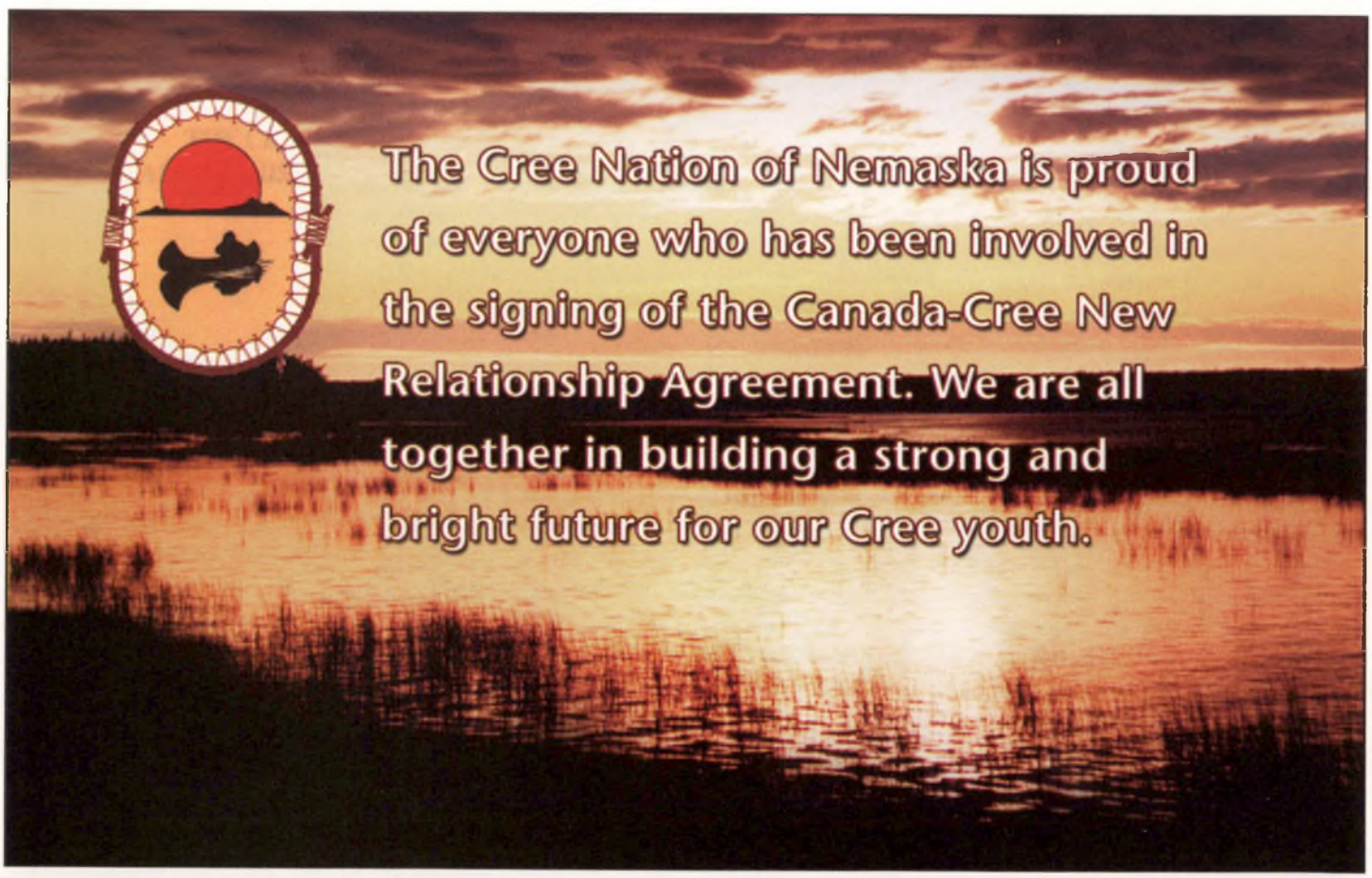
If the province were to cut Chantiers' allocation by 60% on April 1, the economic impact on Chibougamau would have been a loss of 700 jobs and $50 million annually, according to the Mayor.

"There's no animosity towards the community of Mistissini from Chibougamau," said Mayor Bubar. "We just want to move ahead and be treated fairly by the province."

"This is an historic occasion because the signing of this agreement completes the vision of our Elders contained in the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. It is also an historic Agreement because it provides for our youth by recognizing Cree Nation Government and by setting out a path for its future."

Grand Chief of the Crees, Matthew Mukash

The Eskan Company would like to express their congratulations to the Grand Council of the Crees on the signing of the historic Canada-Cree Agreement.


The Cree Nation of Nemaska is proud of everyone who has been involved in the signing of the Canada-Cree New Relationship Agreement. We are all together in building a strong and bright future for our Cree youth.

Algonquins of Barriere Lake in deep trouble

Blockade erected at tiny troubled reserve

By Steve Bonspiel

After months of infighting, mud-slinging and name-calling, the Algonquins of Barriere Lake have hit a low point that resulted in the erection of a barricade on March 2 and with it, caused even more irreparable damage to the tiny reserve of 350.

After being appointed by the Elders and the community under the Algonquin hereditary system last May, Jean Maurice Matchewan stepped down as chief amidst allegations of drug use and possessing an illegal hand gun.

He, along with the Elders, but without community consultation, then appointed Benjamin Nottoway as acting chief. That was just one of the contentious moves made by the former council.

The problems started in earnest when a new chief, Casey Ratt, was appointed to the leadership position on January 30 through the proper channels. The long delay in getting Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to recognize the decision was partially to blame for the heat being turned up on both sides.

> "They vandalized their own places before they took off. They're just trying to make us look bad."

"They say we're dissidents and a minority faction," said Ratt. "This is a recognized band council, not an interim one. They don't want to relinquish the power they have."

Once the blockade was up, a second one was erected by Ratt and his supporters. A third one, from the Nottoway's side, followed shortly thereafter.

Accusations of foul play flew from both sides, but when Elders from each side had to be taken to hospital because of exhaustion and to monitor their decreasing diabetic condition, both sides started to think about lifting them.

"We didn't do this (take over the leadership) because we didn't like the former council," said Ratt. "We did this based upon actions of the former council that did not reflect the community's wishes."

Finally on March 7 the barricades were taken down. A heavy Sûreté de Québec presence has followed ever since.

Nottoway and Matchewan shut down the school last year to put pressure on the government to get them back to the negotiating table. Ratt said a major agreement for local police to patrol the reserve was not renewed by the former council for reasons unknown.

The Head Start Program, for children aged 3-6 to get acclimatized to school before they enter elementary school, was

first moved to the health centre and then cancelled altogether by Nottoway's group. That was part of the motivation for Ratt to seek appointment as chief.

"They were using our kids as pawns to push their political agenda," he said. "We pleaded with them that there must be other options."

Ratt went to a meeting in Quebec City on March 19 to meet with the province to try to reinstate funding for public security.

"We're trying to make a difference here," said Ratt, who used to work at the local health centre before becoming chief.

"There's a trend here, they wanted everything to stop in order to get INAC to the table. Why make your own people suffer to do that? This is how the leadership became an issue for the majority of the community."

Former Acting Chief Nottoway claims that the school was shut down because they did not have proper Algonquin language instruction. He admitted it was a tactic to put pressure on the government, but he said that his side did not want the schools to continue to be run like residential schools were, where kids were not encouraged or able to learn or speak their language.

"We, the Algonquins of Barriere Lake do not recognize Casey as chief," said Nottoway.

When asked about the accusations of violence and the trashing of houses on the part of his followers, Nottoway said it was not true as he made inflammatory comments of his own.

"They vandalized their own places before they took off," he said. "They're just trying to make us look bad."

Although sorting out the mess will take some time, Ratt said he was open to meeting with Nottoway to settle their differences for the betterment of the community. Nottoway quickly replied that there was no chance that will ever happen.

"The only solution is to recognize us as leadership," he said. "We won't back down because we believe in our land and our language and culture."

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EVEN DIET POP HAS ACID WHICH ATTACKS THE TOOTH ENAMEL, CAUSING CAVITIES!
I DON'T WANT TO RUIN MY GOOD LOOKS! I'LL TAKE SOME WATER!
KITTY, YOU'RE SUCH A DO-GOODER!!
TOM, I'M SO GLAD YOU DECIDED TO DROP THE POP!
GIRLS! NO NEED TO FIGHT OVER ME...!
Illustrator: Lea House
Building a healthier, stronger Cree nation.
Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James
Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

Two Elders die in snowmobile accident in Kuujjuarapik

The communities of Kuujjuarapik and Whapmagoostui are in mourning as two Elders were struck by a snowmobile March 14. Mina Tooktoo Meeko died instantly from her injuries. Mary Angatookalook Fleming was rushed to the Montreal General Hospital but succumbed to her wounds the following morning.

Family members say that Meeko, 70, and Fleming, 73, were on their way home from their evening sewing circle when the accident happened.

Sûreté du Québec spokesperson Marie-Josie Ouellett confirmed the driver of the snowmobile was Rickie Weetaltuk, from Kuujjuarapik.

Weetaltuk, 20, was immediately arrested by the Kuujjuarapik Regional Police Service and later charged with hit-and-run as well as drunk driving causing death.

It is not known if narcotics were also a factor in the incident.

Weetaltuk is currently being held at the Amos Detention Centre.

A court date for the accused is yet to be determined.

photo by Sonny Orr

Women gathering at the culture camp to celebrate International Women's Day in Whapmagoostui

Chief and Council members jailed as KI and Platinex dispute heats up

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug Chief Donny Morris and Council members face six months in jail as their fight against Platinex Inc. continues.

In a decision March 17, the Ontario Superior Court sentenced the KI chief and councillors to a six-month prison term for contempt of court. The KI leaders defied an October 25 court order giving Platinex Inc. access to the First Nation's ancestral land at Big Trout Lake, north of Thunder Bay, Ont.

Formerly known as Big Trout First Nation, the community is calling on the Ontario government to revoke Platinex Inc.'s exploratory drilling licenses, which were granted without the First Nation's consent or consultation.

According to Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act, 1982, governments are required "to consult First Nations when they are contemplating conduct that may adversely impact Aboriginal or treaty rights."

Other First Nations supporting KI's fight against Platinex include the Anishinabek Nation (Union of Ontario Indians) and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

Alanis Obomsawin to receive lifetime achievement award

Documentary filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin will accept the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement in a ceremony May 3 in Ottawa.

A member of the Abenaki Nation, Obomsawin is honoured for her lifelong achievement in documentary film, including over 30 documentaries which have inspired audiences throughout Canada and internationally. Her films include *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance and Incident at Restigouche*.

Obomsawin's numerous awards already include two from the Canadian government: the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts and Officer of the Order of Canada.

Government Film Commissioner and National Film Board Chairperson Tom Perlmutter said, "I stand in awe of Alanis, of her remarkable creative energy and indefatigable passion to connect and engage. For me, she embodies the heart and soul of the NFB – social engagement through creation; transforming people and communities through the power of the imagination. Alanis makes clear why art matters."

Hosted by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, the award ceremony showcases short films about the achievements of Obomsawin and the other five recipients of the award.

Nominations for the prestigious Performing Arts Awards are accepted from the general public and the performing arts community.

feature

2008 National Outfitter's Hunting & Fishing Show

By Amy German

Though the 2008 National Outfitter's Hunting and Fishing Show went off without a hitch, the show itself has seen bigger years.

Like any large-scale exposition, hundreds of exhibitors lined the aisles of Montreal's Palais de Congrès from February 12 to 15 but instead of the many product hawkers, dog breeders and taxidermists that crowded the trade show in 2007, this year's show was more focussed on actual outfitting companies.

It was not to say that the outfitting companies were not seeing their fair share of business as according to some, the bookings were booming. But throughout the show there was talk about how the market was changing due to everything from a stronger Canadian dollar to international terrorism to environmentalism. As a result, the distinct sound of American accents did not echo through the outfitting show as it has in previous years. In recent years the Quebec outfitting market has shifted its focus from global to local and many exhibitors spoke of changing their marketing strategies to entice more Quebecers to their outdoor paradises.

Said Andrew Coon, the tourism coordinator for Mistissini Tourism, "You have to really find the right market. For example, Montreal is a good place. These days there are not a lot of Americans who come up fishing due to the Canadian dollar. In Mistissini the main industry is fishing and our biggest market is Quebec. For the past couple of years we have really tried to concentrate on the Quebec market as we are really trying to boost it."

Eddy, from the Cree Outfitter and Tourism Association (COTA), concurred that despite the change in markets, "(business) has been very good for the last few years," and that the show was the best way for the COTA to connect with new clients.

George Awashish of Awashish Outdoor Adventures had a big smile on his face as he greeted new and old clients from his kiosk at the exposition. "So far, so good! Montreal is the best for us in terms of business, marketing and sales," Awashish exclaimed.

When asked what kept bringing him back to the Montreal show every year, he responded, "I would say the Montreal

For all ages.

and Quebec City region is where I get most of my clients. I get probably 50% of them from this show."

When asked if international tourism still dominated the North's outfitting industry, Awashish responded, "It's mainly Canadian now and it has been for the past three years. It is because of the weaker U.S. dollar and all of the other things that have been going on, like 9/11 and mad cow disease. Business has been stable but it hasn't increased a lot. We are doing just enough to have a good time."

For Awashish, the big attraction at his camp is fishing and the possibility of catching the famed Rupert River Brooke Trout. "It's a big fish and tastes good. It's one of the most popular sports-fishing fish. On the average they are about two to three pounds, but some go up as high as six."

At the same time, with fishing being the focus of his business, one wonders if the current hydro project and its reputation was harming Awashish's business. When asked about it, Awashish responded, "People ask questions about it, especially in Montreal. They think the Rupert River is gone for good and it's easy when you don't know much about the project. It has little impact on the business but Hydro-Québec is working on it."

Though there may have been far fewer product vendors at this year's outfitting show, it was not to say that there were not still a handful hawking their wares to the hunting and fishing crowd, showing off the best in terrain vehicles, boats, knives and other outdoorsman accessories.

Martin Dutremble of Couteaux Personnalisés Martin had a wide variety of handmade knives on display that could make any outdoorsman's day. "We make hunting and fishing knives mainly, as well as kitchen knives. They are all custom-made and every knife that we make comes from these raw materials. We generally draw the blade with the customer (present) so it's exactly how they want it," said Dutremble as he presented a work in progress. Though his prices varied according to the customer's needs, the half-made product he was presenting to the clients surrounding his display was going for approximately $100 when finished. For more information or to order go to: www.couteauxmartin.com

According to Doug over at the Londero Sports kiosk, the hot ticket item of the moment was a fishing reel. "The newest edition of the Mitchell series, basically it's an eight bearing reel, it has anti-reverse and the price is ideal at $41.95. It is going to be one of the hottest sellers online. Londero Sports in St-Jean, we do online sales but not for fishing."

Fortunately Mitchell has its own website that redirects interested customers to a local retailer. To find out more about Mitchell reels and related fishing products, go to: http://www.fishmitchell.com/

One of the most worthwhile reasons to visit a large-scale hunting and fishing show, other than looking for an outfitting camp, is to take advantage of the products that are not usually available through regular retailers such as hand-carved hunting calls.

Recall Designs had a spectacular kiosk packed with just about every variety of game call that one could ever use in this province.

Two guides for the Cree country experience

Antlers for sale

Andrew Coon and Titus Shecapio

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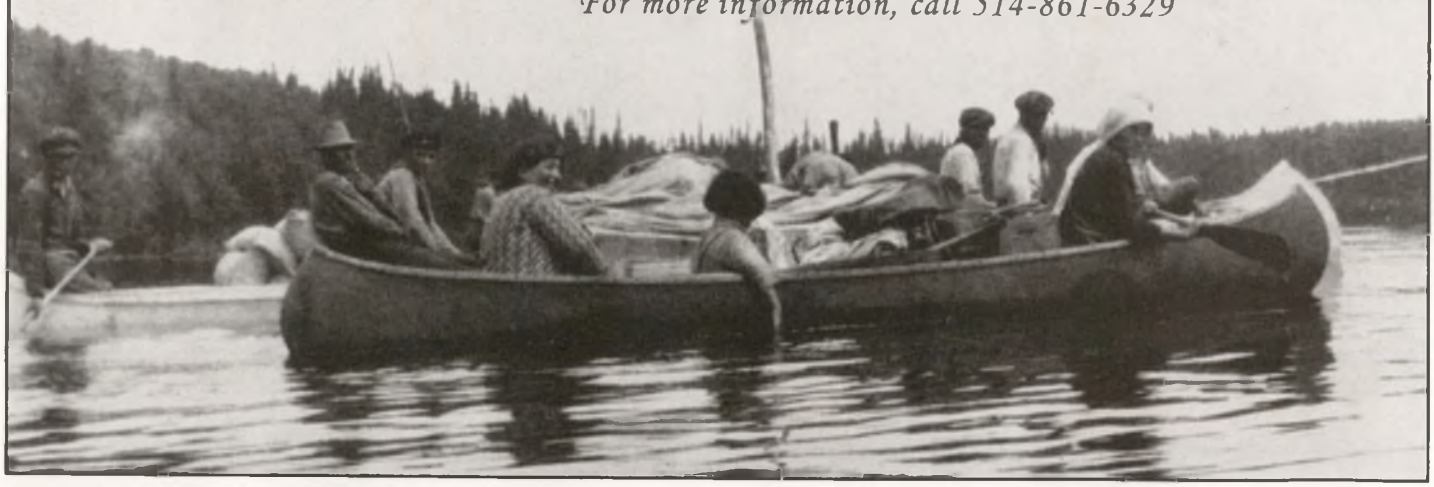

All of the products were hand carved by Rhéal Charlebois, a carpenter by profession and outdoor enthusiast who found a passion for carving fancy game calls after an accident. Charlebois had various different duck, goose, turkey, crow, deer and "predator" calls available at his booth and he eagerly demonstrated each of them. Fortunately for those unable to attend the exposition, all of Charlebois' products are available on his website and for those interested, pricing starts at around $125. For more information or to order, go to: http://www.recalldesigns.com/

So, despite the fact that the variety of clients might be changing for the provincial outfitting industry, cash was rapidly changing hands at this year's outfitting show. Hundreds if not thousands of enthusiasts dropped by to book their hunting and fishing adventures, check out the latest in hunting and fishing supplies, and drool over the boats, ATVs and other delights that would only thrill a true outdoorsman (or woman).

Pourvoirie Hipou's booth

Will Nicholls and his long lost brother

Killer smile, let's hear the call...

George Awashish and his long lost brother

By Amy German

Though the community of Attawapiskat in northern Ontario has been fighting for a new school for eight years, it was not until a few weeks ago when Charlie Angus, NDP MP for Timmins-James Bay, posted a video on the video-sharing network, YouTube.com, that Attawapiskat suddenly became a national issue.

The story starts nearly 30 years ago when the J.R. Nakogee School became contaminated by a diesel spill while under the federal government's watch. According to Angus, "It was the largest diesel contamination spill in Ontario and it was sitting underneath that grade school. When it was discovered that this leak had occurred, the government's response was to stonewall any decision and demand as many studies as it possibly could in order to delay action."

In 2000 the parents of the community decided to pull their children out of the school as both teachers and students were falling ill from the diesel build-up. At this point in time the federal government acted by giving the community temporary "portables" or self-contained trailer-like classrooms. Eight years later, the elementary students of Attawapiskat are still using the now dilapidated, cracked and poorly insulated portables and many need to walk through –40° temperatures on some days to go from building to building.

WHEN ANGUS WENT TO ONE TORONTO SCHOOL TO ENCOURAGE THE STUDENTS TO WRITE LETTERS TO STRAHL, **ONE GRADE 6 STUDENT PIPED UP ABOUT MAKING A YOUTUBE VIDEO TO HELP THE CAMPAIGN.**

"So that is what brought us to the negotiations for a new school. This is a fairly large community with 400 students

who have been housed in portables for eight years. We have had three Indian Affairs ministers support the project and done umpteen studies. Everything was set to go ahead this coming spring. And then Chuck Strahl turned around and cancelled it. He never even informed the people and has made no efforts to speak with the leadership; it's because the government doesn't consider building First Nations' schools a priority," said Angus.

According to Angus, the federal government is now using the funds that were earmarked for the school in other projects such as the clean water and sewage program that was announced in the last federal budget.

"They have been a little disingenuous with explaining what happened to Attawapiskat. Last year $109 million from capital money was under-spent by INAC (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) and returned to the Treasury Board. That would have built schools, houses and medical clinics across First Nations territory. It was money that they simply refused to spend even though they have got tons of projects that are just sitting there waiting for a go-ahead," said Angus.

Attawapiskat was not looking for a government handout to build the school either. The community instead had a rather innovative plan in place. "The community wasn't asking the government for $30 million. It was asking the government to sign off on a bank loan tuition agreement and the community would have built its own school with its own financing. It would have been paid off over many years. So this would have been a model for how to build schools in First Nations territory," said Angus.

When asked what he thought was behind this, Angus surprisingly responded, "Well, I can only think of two scenarios. One is that it serves Chuck Strahl's political interests to be mean to First Nations' children. And the other scenario is that Chuck may be not in control of his department. I think that there are elements in his department that don't like these alternative proposals because it gives more power to First Nations to start deciding their own fate and get out from under the thumb of Indian Affairs."

With that in mind, Angus and the NDP decided to try to appeal to Strahl and his ministry by starting a letter-writing campaign by school children in Ontario. When Angus went to one Toronto school to encourage the students to write letters to Strahl, one Grade 6 student piped up about making a YouTube video to help the campaign. "And it struck me like a bold of lightning, this is where they go for their education!" said Angus and he spent the following weekend putting together and posting the video. Since uploading the video on February 25, it has been viewed 22,450 times.

"We certainly didn't expect 21,000 hits in two weeks. It's becoming one of the most talked-about political videos in the country. The point of the video was to give any Grade 6 student the tools they need to join this letter-writing campaign and this is where Indian Affairs doesn't get it. They are banking on this thing just blowing over but the amazing thing about the Internet is that it doesn't. Every day we get 700 to 1000 new viewers and we get emails from people across Canada who are outraged at what is happening and want to help," said Angus.

Since the video was released the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association has also taken on the cause with its 2.1 million students who are being encouraged to write letters.

Though the issue has yet to see any resolution the movement is getting stronger every day with some individuals in the community going on hunger strikes in protest of INAC. Sacred fires were also lit in the nearby community of Fort Albany in the hope that the issue will be resolved.

To share your feelings with Chuck Strahl write him at:
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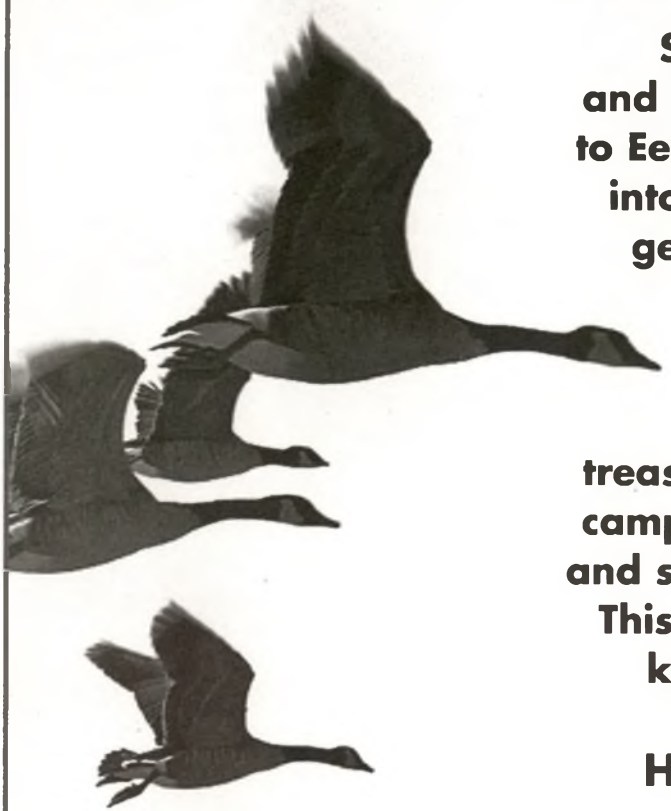
photos courtesy of Bill Blake

The Grand Council of the Crees wishes all Eeyouch/Eenouch a happy Goose Break!



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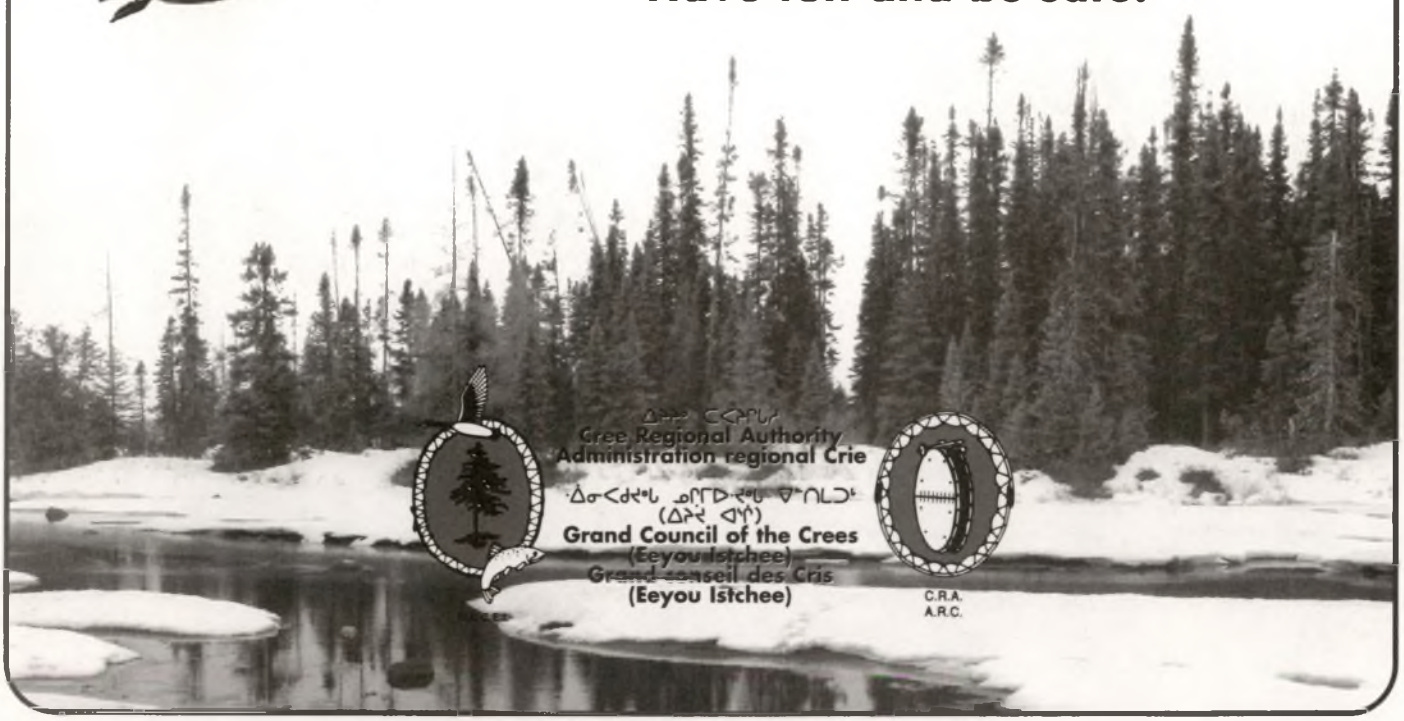

Working together

Val d'Or Friendship Centre fights to eliminate racism

By Will Nicholls

The Native Friendship Centre of Val d'Or doesn't do things in a small way. It looked at racial discrimination eight years ago and decided to do something about it. It's a process that has grown from a march to a week-long schedule of activities.

As Friendship Centre president Jacqueline Kistabish said, "It will always be part of our mission to let people know about Aboriginals and to get to know those who are not. I'm from an Algonquin/Cree family, even amongst the Algonquin there is discrimination. Together we can make miracles, I believe that. We are proud to be part of the movement to promote tolerance and acceptance of differences on this International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21) organized by the United Nations in 1986 and celebrated in Canada since 1989."

Kistabish was backed up by numerous speakers including the official spokesperson Samian, a role model and singer. He talked about his own difficulties. "I'm Métis. I've been a victim of discrimination. Aboriginals would not accept me because I was too white and white people didn't accept me because I'm Aboriginal. I like to be on stage to express myself. I am very proud to be the spokesperson for this event."

Edith Cloutier, the executive director of the Friendship Centre, welcomes the many mayors who turned out for the event and said. "It's important because the cities are where Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals interact. I would like to thank you all for being here in such large numbers. It shows the road we have traveled together to fight racism and discrimination in Val d'Or and in Abitibi because this year the event is growing."

Cloutier said these actions are aimed at breaking down prejudices and constructing bridges between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. "In Val d'Or the initiative is carried out by the First Nations but we know that we have cohabitation and openness challenges in Quebec, which are at the centre of discussions. This year, we have called on organizations and institutions that represent us, Aboriginals and Quebecers, so they can fight against any form of discrimination by signing, in the name of their fellow citizens, a friendship declaration between nations."

Algonquin Deputy Grand Chief Marlene Jerome talked about her jewelry pointing to the fact it had four colours – red, black, white and yellow. "Today I wear a symbol; it represents the four colours of each People. It represents unity and international peace; this is a vision that our Elders had. We try to uphold this vision because we really believe in it. I think it's important to coexist, to work together, and to promote such values as love that take away all prejudices. Also important are sharing and cultural diversity. It is important to know the other person. Ignorance brings prejudice, racism, and I believe it's important to live as a nation, that each nation respects who they are; to show our youth those examples. It's important to participate in activities like this."

Jerome said the Aboriginal people have a lot to share with non-Natives. One of the events would be a pow wow on March 22. When Jerome talked she reached a lot of people something she attributed to "I didn't prepare for today but I speak from the heart, that's what our elders showed us, to speak and do things from the heart. Let's continue this work. Yes, each day we have hard moments, but those are opportunities to find solutions for a better life."

Louise Bryce and Vincent Rousson, from the Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT) respectively, were on hand to describe their part in the events to lessen racism.

continued on page 23

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An historic signing has happened: the Canada-Cree New Relationship Agreement.

The Cree Nation of Mistissini would like to congratulate everyone involved in the process.

Cree Nation of Mistissini

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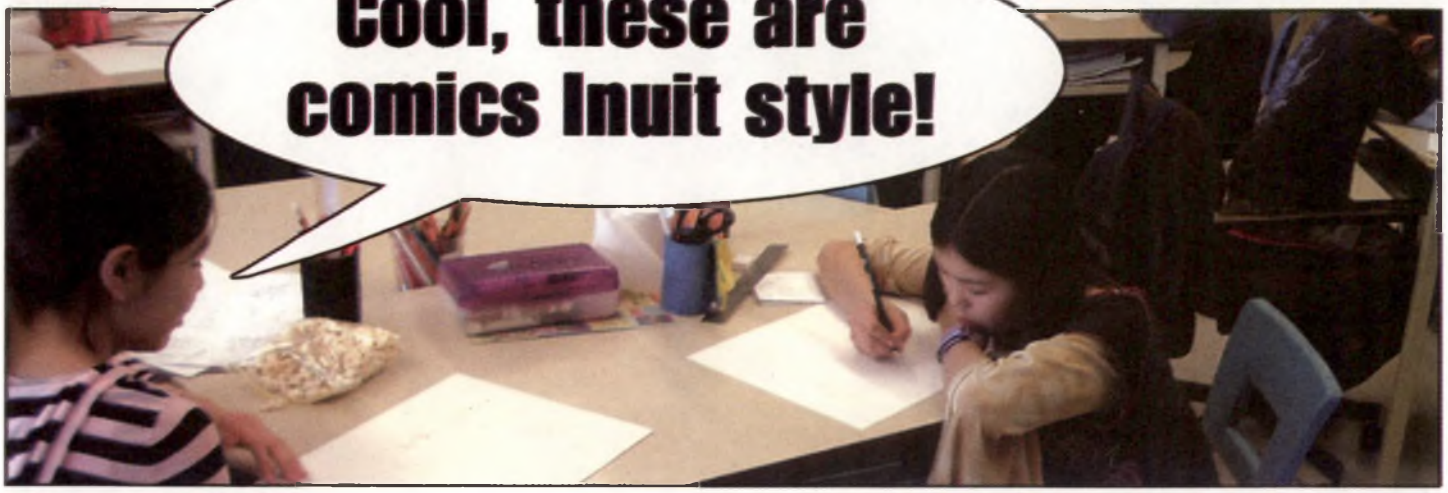

Montreal journalist Rupert Bottenberg introduces comic-book art to high school students

By Amy German

To promote literacy and help kids develop strategies against bullying, Montreal journalist and comic-book artist Rupert Bottenberg travelled to Kangiqsualujjuaq, Nunavik in northern Quebec this past February to teach high school students the fine art of creating comic strips.

Bottenberg came to the north as part of a program called "Don't Touch My Board, Man," an initiative that is overseen by non-profit organization Blue Metropolis, best known for its large annual Montreal literary festival.

Having taught the program several times in Montreal high schools, Bottenberg felt as though he was one of the most qualified people in the region to teach the program and he went to Nunavik with the hope of inspiring young people to follow in his footsteps. "Comics are the artistic medium that I grew up on and love the most. I have done so many different things within the context of comics – like creating them and organizing events and now I'm teaching comics," said Bottenberg.

"The Inuit aesthetic lends itself perfectly to the comics medium. It's because Inuit visual art is so simple, clear, graphic and bold. This is something that is absolutely necessary in comics because you are working with a very limited space. Comics are essentially narrative stories told in a sequence of images but those images have to be small so that you can fit any number of them on a page. So, there is not much room for being vague or grandiose," said Bottenberg.

For one week, Bottenberg was a guest of the Kangiqsualujjuaq community and of Anne Lanteigne's Grade 7 class at Ulluriaq School. He was warmly received by the students not just because he was a stranger in town bearing art and innovation from the south but also because the class's math course was suspended for a week so that Bottenberg could work with the children during class time.

"This was one of the best success rates I have ever had with this particular project because students were actually sticking to the theme," he said, noting the difficulty he had experienced previously with city students losing their focus. "I don't know if they were tremendously enthusiastic about (the bullying theme) but they certainly worked with it. And they all ended up telling pretty much the same story with their pieces. They seemed to be willing to give us exactly what we were looking for and they did a serious job and had fun with it, which I know sounds like a contradiction," said Bottenberg.

The Inuit aesthetic lends itself perfectly to the comics medium. It's because Inuit visual art is so simple, clear, graphic and bold.

By the time Bottenberg left the community at the end of the week, the majority of his students had already completed their "boards." Bottenberg felt that the

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De nature et de culture...

Pour la première fois cette année, Tourisme Baie-James s'associe avec la nouvelle association touristique régionale crie, Tourisme Eeyou Istchee, pour présenter le gala régional qui se tiendra le 3 avril prochain à Mistissini. Cette collaboration représente un défi à relever pour les deux associations et permettra de créer des rapprochements entre les deux communautés et l'industrie touristique.

Le gala régional des Grand Prix du tourisme québécois Desjardins vise à reconnaître les entreprises qui se démarquent par leur excellence et leurs efforts en tourisme.

Nous invitons tous les représentants de l'industrie touristique à se joindre à nous pour cet événement. Pour ce faire, veuillez communiquer avec nous au 1-888-748-8140.

Of nature and culture...

For the first time this year, James Bay Tourism is partnering with the new regional Cree tourism association, Eeyou Istchee Tourism, for the presentation of the regional gala that will be held April 3rd, 2008 in Mistissini. The collaboration between both associations in rising to meet this challenge can only strengthen and increase the relationship between the two communities and the tourism industry.

The regional gala of the Desjardins Quebec Tourism Awards recognizes businesses that have distinguished themselves by their excellence and efforts in the tourism industry.

We would like to invite all representatives from the Tourism industry to join us for this event. In order to do so, simply get in touch with us at 1-888-748-8140.

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program was such a success and that the students took so well to the medium that he wants to go back not only to work in the high school again in the same context but he also has some ideas of his own.

"I am actually quite interested in proposing a publishing project that would involve seeking out Elders to recount fables from Inuit mythology and history that could then be worked on by a bunch of teenagers. It would involve teenagers interviewing Elders, transcribing the stories into Inuktitut and then translating them into English and French and then furthermore getting several to illustrate and create a book. It's an excellent way of communicating an important part of Inuit culture. There is a severe shortage of books in Inuktitut and this would be something that the teachers would be eager to get their hands on," said Bottenberg.

For more information on Blue Metropolis and its literary programs, go to: http://bluemetropolis.org/index.php?id=52

Racism continued from page 17

Bryce said, "We've prepared many activities which will end with the gathering for the march. We prepared an activity on racial discrimination awareness in the form of a game with questions on myths and realities. We hope that it will encourage reflection and discussions among students."

"On March 20, we have a lunch for the march and the show but you will also have the chance to hear Ellen Gabriel, the president of the Association of Aboriginal Women of Quebec, who will come to speak about discrimination based on gender. This will be done in English. We want to thank the Native Friendship Centre for inviting us since there are more and more Aboriginals on the campus."

Even the local daycare is getting into the battle because as general manager France-Claude Goyette said, "For us, racial discrimination is like a virus at the CPE (Centre de la petite enfance). We believe that the closer we get to the kids, the closer we get to the parents, that the virus doesn't exist at that age. I've been at the CPE for five years and I've never encountered that virus. We firmly believe that by cultivating tolerance and knowledge of different cultures for our kids, they will grow up immune to this racial discrimination which contributes to all this violence. It's one of our biggest wishes."

Jean-Maurice Matte, of the Regional Conference of the Inuit of Abitibi-Témiscamingue, said they are proud to be a part of the anti-racism week and said there was a lot of positive energy at the Friendship Centre and it showed in their work. "The population has to mobilize against racial discrimination and it's by participating in activities like this one that we will learn more about our populations, and put an end to racial discrimination," said Matte. "We will have the chance to get to know each other better, Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals, by participating in activities."

Jane Lavery, from the Western Quebec School Board, said they are very proud to join in the cause against racial discrimination. She said, "In order to do this we offer different services to the Aboriginal population year-round. Our schools' mission is to teach, socialize and qualify, and each school has projects which help Aboriginal students to succeed. There are activities on being aware of differences between different cultures and throughout our community, activities against violence, against racism. Different activities and demonstrations will take place during this week. Many of our primary and secondary schools will take part in the march on March 20 and we are very proud of that. Our school board is proud to promote values like the respect of differences, cooperation, justice, and equality of opportunity to its staff and its partners in order to see its values develop."

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SCREEN SHOTS

BY THE SHADOW CRITIC

Jumper

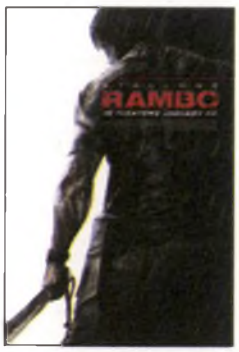
This movie is about David Rice (Hayden Christensen), a young man who, when he gets into a life-threatening situation, finds out he can jump through space to a safe place. With a little thought and control, he learns he can jump to anywhere in the world he sees a picture of. Hence, he leaves his dull life and starts jumping all over the world in search of adventure and a better life then he had. His only anchor to the bleak world he was a part of before is Millie (Rachel Bilson), a woman he had a crush on in high school. When trying to return to his past, David learns there is a group of people dedicated to hunting down people with his powers called Paladins. They seek to rid the world of people possessing powers beyond other humans. So, the adventure begins. There are thoughts of morality in the movie as jumpers can leap in and out of bank vaults to get resources. Then, again those chasing them think nothing of hurting their family members to trap and kill these jumpers. It is not certain whether director Doug Liman wanted to emphasize the idea of moral greys in good and evil but the moviegoer is left with this. The movie is interesting, and could easily be mistaken for a pilot episode to a new TV series.

Welcome Home, Roscoe Jenkins

This movie is about Roscoe Jenkins (Martin Lawrence) a successful daytime talk show host who thrives on controversy going home for his parents' 50th wedding anniversary. His fiancée is a fictitious winner from television series *Survivor* with the mentality to win at the game of life. His young son is only interested in seeing his grandparents and cousins. Roscoe is afraid to return home as it was a life he escaped from. There are a number of funny scenes as he reconnects with his friends and parents. He also sees the woman he had a crush on since he was a young boy, and who was a part of the reason he became estranged from his family. For fans of Martin Lawrence, you will not be disappointed as the movie is lighthearted and enjoyable.

The Spiderwick Chronicles

The Spiderwick Chronicles is a popular children's series of fantasy books written by Holly Black. The five book series has been translated into 27 different languages. There are goblins and all sorts of magical creatures. A family moves into an old house that has been abandoned for a while, and twin brother Jared quickly grows intrigued by strange noises in the walls. He starts exploring and stumbles upon a secret room with a book. The book has a warning that if you open the *Spiderwick Chronicles* you could change the way you see the world around you. Arthur Spiderwick is the name of author of the Chronicles, and the boy's great uncle who disappeared 80 years earlier. Sure enough, the boy unlocks a world, and starts seeing mythical creatures that are trying to get their hands on the book which holds secrets about their world. There is adventure and fun in the movie. However, it is not like *Harry Potter* or *Narnia* with a grand adventure taking place in a new world. The movie is mostly set in normal reality with much more emphasis on a family divorce and restarting their lives than on a magical adventure. The movie will likely appeal to fans of the children's book, but as for other movie-goers the special affects are not of the same quality or frequency as other movies of this genre. It is worth a look, but will make you count the days until the next *Lord of the Rings* or *Harry Potter*.



Rambo

The return of John Rambo, we knew it was not far away when Sylvester Stallone wrote, directed and starred in Rocky Balboa last year. Once again, Stallone writes, directs and stars in this recent installment to the Rambo movies. *Rambo: First Blood* debuted in 1982, and the last Rambo picture, *Rambo 3*, came out in 1988. Twenty years later, John Rambo is living in the jungles of northern Thailand, far from civilization catching snakes for tourist shows. He is approached by a group of missionaries to take them and medical supplies into Burma. He tries to dissuade them but they want to help the villagers caught in a violent reality. In the end, Rambo is left having to go search for them when they go missing. The action is still incredible, with special effects adding a dimension that previous movies did not have. There is not much of a plot and John Rambo looks a bit old. This said, it delivers on the action sequence. I do not know if I would spend a full admission, but for a bargain night at the theatres, it wasn't bad.

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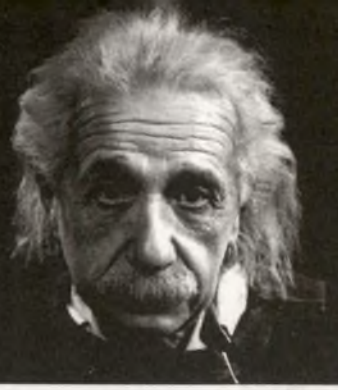

By Cheryl Tomatuk-Bagan

What makes a good leader?

With all the campaigning and media coverage happening in the U.S. right now, I can't help but keep the idea of elections and leadership on my mind. Nothing seems to disappoint people more than campaign promises that aren't met. We tend to gauge a successful term for an individual by asking: what did he/she do and where is the change or continuity? Platform promises are impractical, and I will tell you why.

Election time is filled with good intentions, but realistically how much can a person truly accomplish when there are many other considerations. For example, what was done previously in that office; have mandates or priorities changed since elected; what type of people make up the decision-making authority because as important as it is that a leader have independent views, it would be terrible if he/she had absolute discretion to decide solely on our behalves.

We consistently set ourselves up for failure through unrealistic expectations. We share unreasonable beliefs about what we expect as a society and worse yet, impose them upon our leaders and politicians. We expect them to promise us the world, to be a martyr for our shortcomings and have the solutions to all our problems. We leave no room for humility or imperfection in those we elect, and in doing that we wash our hands of accountability.

Our compliance to believe in that process translates into us electing representatives who present a false pride, having internalized those perceptions. It's a sad notion to have a state where representatives seem to put reputation before responsibility, in all matters, albeit personally or professionally because of image. When important decisions are made with image in mind it keeps us in an oppressive state and we suffer.

We need to elect people who are honest with themselves and with the people. We determine what we will stand for and what we will settle for. Sometimes I wonder if we want a public relations person who attends events and makes the Kodak moments instead of a person who has the true responsibility of leadership.

I don't want a leader who is preoccupied with how many people he/she can impress, who takes credit and signs his/her name to work he/she hasn't actually done, who is never in his/her own office or who feeds people's hopes with promises of money as our only solution.

I don't want a leader who uses his/her position for favours, incurs a large expense account or food budget at the cost of the people, uses time, resources and accomplishments of a position to promote then propel into some class of an elite. Leadership roles are fairly compensated, and it is an honour to be elected by the people.

Knowing what a leader is not makes it very clear to me what a leader really is.

I want a leader who knows what he/she knows because he/she generates ideas, not because a lawyer or consultant briefed him/her or gave him/her direction. A person who is balanced and healthy, who is aware of what is happening, knows what needs to be done, listens to the people and leads us there with the gift of vision.

I want leaders who are clean and free from any alcohol or drug abuse, like that of our regional leaders who live healthy lives and can think from a clear mind in that respect. I am disappointed we can elect people to lead and represent our communities who get drunk or high while there are great problems with addictions and abuse occurring in our communities and homes.

People place a great deal of confidence in their leaders; they hold the power of persuasion and influence, which is a huge responsibility. It is easy to become corrupted with perceived power. We all know someone who entered politics with good intentions only to change and become inflicted with arrogance and false pride.

For many, it seems to boil down to what people perceive leadership to be. We should all take responsibility to be more realistic, otherwise we are just setting ourselves up for failure. We need to change our view on what leadership is and does. We all have gifts to contribute to our society; a leader has gifts that are more apparent, not more important.

Being a leader does not make you exempt from the same issues everyone else faces. Let's not pretend. We invest a bit of ourselves into the person we elect. We say we want someone who will create change, but that is lip service. We still expect perfection from one person because we fear it will reflect badly on our own real issues. We still elect people who perpetuate the beliefs we have on them.

Our limitations and expectations hold us back. Once we can acknowledge this, we can move forward. Change is not bad. Change is good. Change is inevitable. Change is necessary.

A good leader is humble and honest, and a good membership is realistic and accepting.

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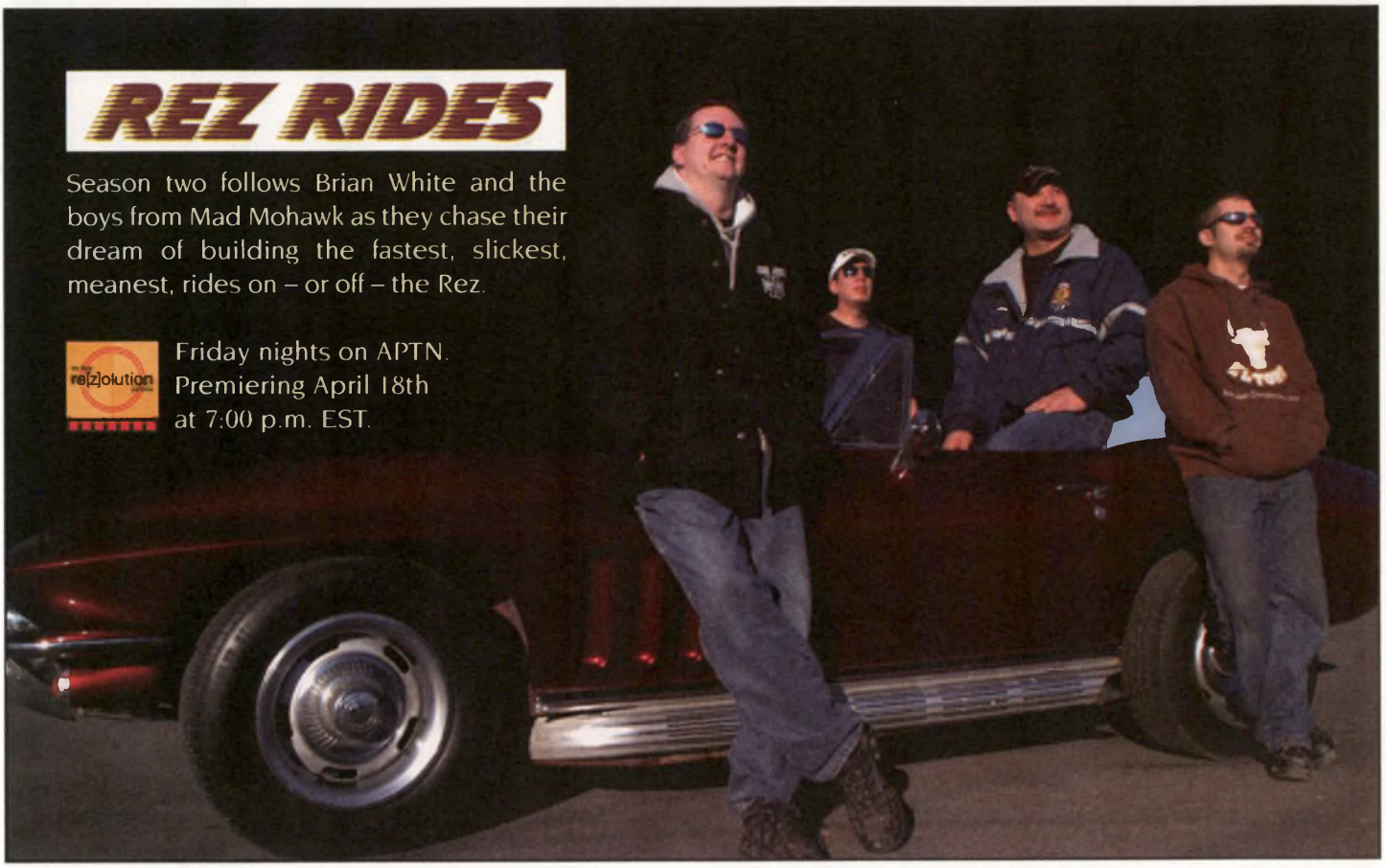

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ENERGY WISE

The Birds and the Bees of Birth Control

I'd just like to say the article on birth control (*Nation*, February 29, 2008) was great and informative for young people in the Cree Nation. However, in the paragraph called "Depo Provera Injections" a bit of information was missing. It could be a great form of birth control for some but it doesn't state one of the most dangerous side effects: Depo Provera causes bone loss. It has recently been discovered that the osteoporotic effects of the injection grow worse the longer Depo Provera is administered, may remain long after the injections are stopped, and may be irreversible. It even has a "Black Box" warning. I just feel that women should know before they chose this method – especially young women after having babies. I remember after having my first baby, the doctor went around with a needle in hand offering it to all the new mothers. They offered it to me the next day and when I told them I wasn't interested they were a bit pushy to give it to me. Again, great article and in the end it's up to the women to decide the method of contraception they chose but think twice about the side effects.

Minnie O'Connor

Ed note: *When it came to discussing Depo Provera,* the Nation *consulted with both the Cree Health Board and a separate, non-partisan source. Though Depo Provera does come with a Black Box warning, the reason we chose not to go into the bone density loss was because after careful consultation, we discovered that the medical community is now refuting this theory to a certain degree though it is still being debated.*

According to a few recent studies, the density lost can be recovered for the most part after discontinuing use of the product and in a relatively short period of time. According to Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada, "Although a variable decrease in BMD (Bone Mineral Density) has been observed, it is not usually sufficiently large to cause the BMD to fall into the osteoporotic range. Furthermore, two cross-sectional studies of past DMPA (Depo Provera) users did not demonstrate a measurable difference in BMD compared with controls, suggesting that there is an improvement in BMD after DMPA is discontinued."

That is not to say that whoever is dispensing this medication should skip over the product warnings. It is the responsibility of the prescribing physician or the nurse dispensing the product to make sure that the patient understands the medication. We also, unfortunately, could not go into every single product contraindication within the context of this article due to space limitations.

Letter to the Nation

After reading your magazine (*Nation*, February 29, 2008) especially the editorial and the news section, I was pretty impressed about it all.

I got to hand it to you, you got the M.B.J. all figured out (more than some of our Cree leaders).

The reality here is, as you are pointing out, M.B.J. is a vehicle with no brakes at all, driven by ignorant persons with no respect or regard to people who were here first, just to run them over. Well, us ordinary Indians are not just going to play dead here.

P.S. to the Cox family, we're behind you all the way 110%.

Paul Dixon
Waswanipi

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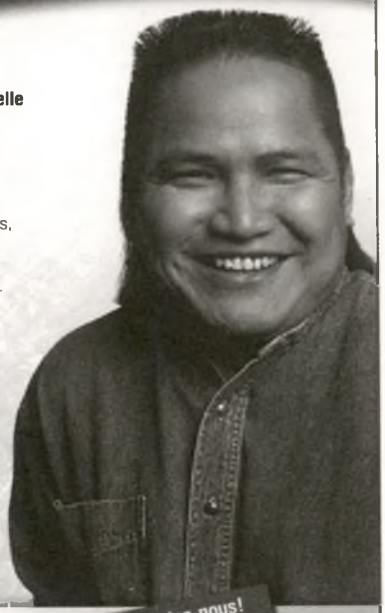

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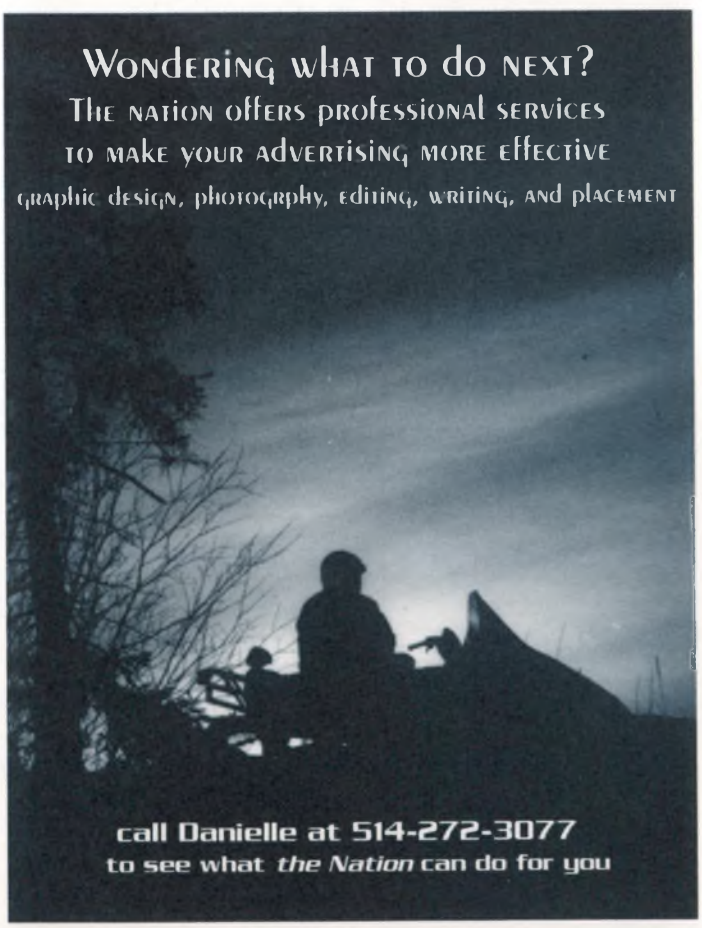

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Wachiya .

We are publishing the following poem at the request of the author. This poem raises sensitive issues. We feel it is appropriate to act on the author's request, as this may provide her with an opportunity she is seeking to share her pain with others in a creative way.

Persons affected by suicide experience various grief reactions some of which remain painful for long periods of time, but most of which can also find resolution in more positive ways, as reflected at the end of the poem below.

It needs to be emphasized that readers who know of persons affected by suicide issues must encourage them to seek help and support FROM SOMEONE THEY TRUST (whether a respected elder, a health or social services professional, a spiritual counselor, a friend or a family member). Such support will guide their path towards healing, balance and hope.

A poem for my youngest brother, Jeremiah Tanoush, who died on February 26, 2007.

My heart is broken into a million pieces and scattered to the wind.
My Dreams are lost and I am not the same.
For my Life will never be the same without you.
A part of me died when you left this world.
I try to find my broken pieces and put them back together,
But it's so hard without you as season's go by.

My Soul feels lost, it wonders around, trying to find its way home.
You left me without saying good-bye, you left me broken-hearted
You never gave me a chance to be there for you
I would have given anything in this world to get you through
Or just to lend you my shoulder to cry on.

I miss your smile, your voice, your laughter
I miss the way you made me laugh
I miss your visits, the way you showed you cared.
I miss everything about you, I miss you Jeremiah

New Season's arrive and my world falls apart all over again
Sometimes I stand by the window, just to see a glimpse of you, but that time never arrives ...
My heart aches just to see one more smile,
I pray to meet you on the shores of heaven.
Every day that goes by is a day closer to seeing your face, your smile,
And hear your sweet voice.
Till then my life will go on,
I WILL LIVE, LOVE AND LAUGH.
I believe that one day our hearts and souls will reunite forever.
I have hope in my life.

Love from your oldest sister, Louise

This poem also goes out to the Cree Nation. Hopefully people will think twice before ending their own lives. Please remember that your family and true friends are always there for you, no matter what. Going through grief after a suicide is not easy, even hearing of another suicide breaks your heart all over again. For those of you who have lost a loved one through suicide, I know how you feel, the days seem endless. But we must never quit, for we have others to live and love for. Our broken hearts and souls will be restored in time. There is HOPE in our lives.
PEACE TO YOU ALL.

EMPLOYMENT

Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James
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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) is a Cree regional entity responsible for the delivery of services and programs for all residents within its jurisdiction. As well as being a regional board, the CBHSSJB also directly manages various classes of establishments operating in accordance with Section 14 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and the various Acts regarding health and Social Services. The CBHSSJB (Region 18) is in the process of implementing a five year Strategic Regional Plan to address the well-being needs of Eenou/Eeyou Istchee (Cree Land).

SECOND POSTING

Coordinator of Human Resources Management – CHISASIBI, Permanent Full-time

The holder of this position contributes to the planning, coordination and evaluation and ensures the organization, implementation and control of specific aspects related to the management of the organization's human resources; HR planning, work organization (including job descriptions), staffing (recruitment and selection, employee files), remuneration and benefits, leaves management, labour relations, absenteeism management, health and safety at work, statistics and HR actions that lead to the goal of Cree staffing according to the organization's policy on such.

Required education and experience:

Bachelor degree in administration with a human resources or labour relations specialization, and 3 years experience in human resources management, at a management level, in a health or social setting, or public organization. Actively pursuing or have the Conseiller en Relations Industriels designation is an asset. (Note 1)

Coordinator of Human Resources Development – CHISASIBI, Permanent Full-Time

The holder of this position contributes to the planning, coordination and evaluation and ensures the organization, implementation and control of specific aspects related to the development of the organization's human resources; HR planning, work organization (including job descriptions), welcoming and orientation, training and development, performance evaluation, supervision, motivation and valuing of staff; exit interviews, statistics, various related activities, and HRD actions that lead to the goal of Cree staffing according to the organization's policy on such.

Required education and experience:

Bachelor degree in administration with a human resources development specialization, and 3 years experience in management in a health or social setting, or public organization; or

Bachelor degree in education, and 3 years experience in management in a health or social setting, or public organization. Additional courses in administration are an asset. (Note 1)

Our ideal candidates will possess the following qualifications:

- Knowledge of the Quebec and federal labor laws, and MHSSQ collective agreements and human resources management regulations for Regional Boards, CLSCs, Youth Protection, Hospitals and Re-adaptation services;
- Knowledge of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), Sections 14 & 28 is an asset;
- Ability to both manage the planning and development of new initiatives and programs, and the maintenance and quality assurance of existing services and programs;
- Knowledge of Cree culture is an asset; and knowledge of, or ability to grasp the issues and context that relate to First Nation health and social services;
- Computer skills: Lotus Notes, Word, Excel and PowerPoint;
- Fluent in French and English, Fluency in Cree is an asset;
- Willing to travel.
- Class 15: min. $59,505 to max. $77,358.

The remuneration and benefits are according to the applicable policies MSSSQ Network. In addition to the usual benefits, moving, storage costs, and housing (when available) will be provided according to established policies. A northern allowance, and either of 3 or 4 trips per year to the point of hiring, for employees recruited further than 50 km, varies according to the employee's status (single or with dependents).

Interested applicants should forward their resume and cover letter by **5 pm, April 12, 2008** to:
Nancy Bobbish, Director of Human Resources
Cree Board of Health & Social Services of James Bay / P.O. Box 250 Chisasibi (Quebec) J0M 1E0
Tel: 819-855-9001 ext. 5237 / Fax: 819-855-2680 / Email: nabobbish@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

Note 1: *In accordance with the organization's Cree Employment Policy (in progress) and various Sections of the JBNQA, the organization has the objective of staffing all of its positions with qualified and competent beneficiaries of the JBNQA.*

UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

One baby at a time

by Xavier Kataquapit

Adam Had'em is known as the shortest poem ever written in the English language. It was written in 1904 by American poet Strickland Gillilan. Oddly enough it was given the title "Lines on the Antiquity of Microbes". This little bit of writing was once a small series of words but it has since grown to encompass many ideas. Keeping with the idea that great things come in small packages I am happy to say that my niece Sara Shisheesh and her partner Silas Wesley just had a new baby boy they named Adam John Nicholas Xavier Wesley. Just like the little poem, tiny Adam is quickly giving new meaning to our large family.

Adam was given his name by his Aunt Renae. He was born at the Moose Factory General Hospital on February 14, 2008 weighing six pounds and 12-and-a-half ounces. The date of his birth was not lost on anyone as he was realized as the Valentine baby. Following the traditional practice of naming new family members in the memory of those who have passed on, Adam John Nicholas Xavier received the name Nicholas in remembrance of Sara's cousin Nicholas Rose. The new baby's name Xavier is in honour of his great-grandfather Xavier Wesley, a prominent Elder from our community.

Babies are a big deal in our First Nation families along the James Bay coast. There are many new babies born every year in our communities. One thing that we have done as a people is that we have managed to keep our population up. A generation ago it was normal to see large family groups of four or more children. In my parents' generation it was common to see families of six, seven, eight or more children. Back then, life was difficult and survival was dependent on skill, luck and numbers. Even though there were many children born, a high infant-mortality rate kept families smaller in size. One of the benefits that was born out of having large families was that through thick and thin with all the difficulties of the European influence and changes that were brought about by a new culture, we have managed to survive one baby at a time.

In our traditional culture, there is never any thought or worry about having a new baby. There are good things about this and there are also negative side effects. However, our First Nations are set up to help and take part in the raising of a new member of the community. Our culture has evolved to fill in the gaps in child care to include other extended members of the family, including aunts, uncles, grandfathers and grandmothers who actively take part in the care of new arrivals. In many cases, this participation branches out even further to include other members of the community at large. It is not unlike what old European societies were like hundreds of years ago.

This extended network of helping hands is needed in the raising of a new baby. It is hard work to take care of a new member of the family. In the first months of life, a baby needs constant attention from someone and although a mother or father wants to be attentive, it is demanding to be on-call 24 hours, every day. To share this workload a close family member is always ready to help in caring for a new child. As the new boy or girl grows older and becomes mobile on his or her own two feet, then the work of running after an active young child is shared by many more people.

I am sure Sara and Silas will be learning traditional Cree methods and teachings in how to raise a child in the north. I have already seen pictures of Adam in a Waspoosiyan, a traditional and decorative wrap that keeps a baby warm and bundled. I am sure his grandparents and great-grandparents will want to place him in a Tikinagun, a traditional cradle board that is normally handmade by someone in the community or is handed down as a family heirloom as it is needed.

Giving life to a new person and raising him or her to become part of a family and a community is the most important investment that our society makes. It is my wish for Adam and all the newborns that they will have safe and happy environments. They will be warm, well fed and loved. With a new hope of sober and drug-free lives becoming a reality for many of my family members and friends I see a great future for all our new babies. One baby at a time.

CLASSIFIEDS

BIRTHS

A big congratulations to Shannon Whiskeychan on the new arrival of her Baby boy Kaynen Whiskeychan on March 12, 2008. Don't know what time & I forgot the pounds giah...Sorry!!! Anywayz, Congrats Buddy! Take good care of your new Baby Boy Kaynen!

I Just Wanna Congratulate Sherry-Ann Wabanonik On The Birth Of Her Baby Girl! Hang On I Love You As A Friend & Take Care! Sending Loads Of Love To You & Your Girl Suzanne N. (mist)

We would like to wish Errol and Priscilla congratulations on the birth of their little girl – Annabella Zerah Dinah - she was born on March 7th, at 6:28 a.m. May God bless you all! Henry Bella and family

BIRTHDAYS

Wishing our son Jaedon Christopher Keion Lane Mapachee Salt a very Happy Sixth Birthday on April 8, 2008. Hope your Birthday wishes come true! Love from Mom, Dad, Sisters JoAnne & JoAnna. xoxoxo

We want to wish happy birthday to Tina. We love you.. Love the 2 Isaacs in your life.

Happy Birthday to our one and only girl Seven Diamond, Celebrating her 6th birthday on the 23rd of March. You are growing up to be one smart girl and we are very proud of you. Love Mom & Dad. & Happy Birthday to Andrea Otter on the same day. Luv ya girls. From the Diamonds.

Happy Birthday to our son Curtis Diamond (~Bosum~) who celebrated his birthday on March 28. Remember you will always have a place at our home. Luv the Diamonds.

Hello big sister Chantal Joy Murdoch. We wanna wish you a Happy Bday and many more to come! We wish we were with you to celebrate your big day. But always remember we are thinking of you and our nephew Jarvis Jeffrey Jerome Murdoch-Icebound. From: Kristy and Jerome Moses in Waskaganish xoxo Miss u a lot sister come and visit us soon

I would like to wish my daughter Chantal Murdoch a Happy 17th Bday on March 31 and many more to come and keep up the good work being a mom. I know it's hard at times but you know I am always there for you to help you through things day by day. Love you always and my grandson also that you brought into this world JARVIS.

We wanna wish our big sister Chantal Joy Murdoch a Happy 17th Bday on March 31. We love you always and our nephew too. From Krisanne and Krystelle Moses.

I would like to wish happy birthday to following people; Natalie Petawabano Loon, Heather Joyce Mianscum, Rodney Petawabano, Nancy Mianscum, Lina Petawabano, Donnie Nichols and last but not least my favourite??? nephew Will Nicholls. Beat you to it this time, Will LOL Aunt Bella

On March 11,2005 a tiny girl was born she was only 4lbs her name is Chantal Bosum. We would like to wish a happy 3rd birthday to our granddaughter Chantal Bosum. Wishing you all the best and many more birthdays to come. We love you very much. We thank the Lord for keep her all the time. Every morning she really loves to sing while everyone is sleeping. With lots of love from grandma (Louise) & grandpa (Walter)

I would like to wish a BIG Happy 3rd Birthday to my girl Chantal Bosum!! Born on March 11..4 pounds! You were so tiny but you changed my world in a big way and I love you so much for that!! And a Happy 3rd Birthday to Chantal's best friend "Gabin"(Gavin) Bosum also born on March 11!!

We would like to wish a Very Happy First Birthday to a special little guy Mark Stewart Tomatuk on March 21! Happy Birthday Marky-Boy! And many, many, many, MANY more to come! Love Isaac, Gabriel, Logan, Randy & Minnie.

"CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CREE NATION ON THE SIGNING OF THE CANADA-CREE AGREEMENT."

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Wishing Belated Happy Birthday to my niece Janine Roberta Janessa Kanatewat on March 7, 2008. HAPPY 5th BIRTHDAY JANINE, I LOVE YOU ALWAYS!!! Glad to see you had fun on birthday party with friends & family (laughing & smiling)...anjabow! Love your auntie Judy

PERSONAL MESSAGES

First of all I want to thank Our Heavenly Father for all his goodness & grace and his unconditional love. Well I just thought of writing something especially for my sisters, Thanx for everything you've done for me, especially, Harriette, Sarah, Chicky, Nancy, and Linda and of course my two mothers Mary & Anna. You guys played an important role in my life. You taught me the meaning of being a woman, a mother, a friend, and a sister. I just wanted to take this time to say how much I appreciate all of your guidance & patience with my growing up.. heh heh.. And I didn't forget about my other sisters- Cecilia, Weena, Karen, Naomi, Lilybelle. You guys are appreciated too, I enjoy all our times together, our laughter, our tears, and of-course our silly-ness and I'm glad I have you guys to share those with (Spend time) heh heh. Love you girls Love always, Emily Frances.

I Just Wanna Shout Out To Ma Girls In Chisasibi! Tori Crowe, Sonia Crowe Their Mom Too Valerie! I Miss You! & Sarah-Jane Washipabano, Shania Cox (NERD), Donna-Lynn Sam! Aww Girls I Miss You! It's Been A while Since We Seen Each Other! Oh A Lil' Shout Out To Susan'sh Nine O'clock & Ma Grama Who's Always Been There For Me I Miss you I Love You, & I Can't Forget My Other Grandma Mary Nine O'clock. We Gotta Bottle Up Those Late Nights! lol Oh & My Dad Alfred, You Are My Hero Daddy, I Miss You SoOo Much You Too Pauline. lol So If I Forget Any Names Of My Family I Miss You!!! Love: Suzanne Nine O'clock (mistissini)

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Where to get help: bilingual, anonymous, confidential and free phone services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Kid's Help Phone Line: 1-800-668-6868 (www.kidshelpphone.ca)

Youth helpline: 1-800-263-2266 (www.teljeunes.com)

Parent helpline: 1-800-361-5085 (www.parenthelpline.ca)

Drugs: help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 (www.drogue-aidereference.qc.ca)

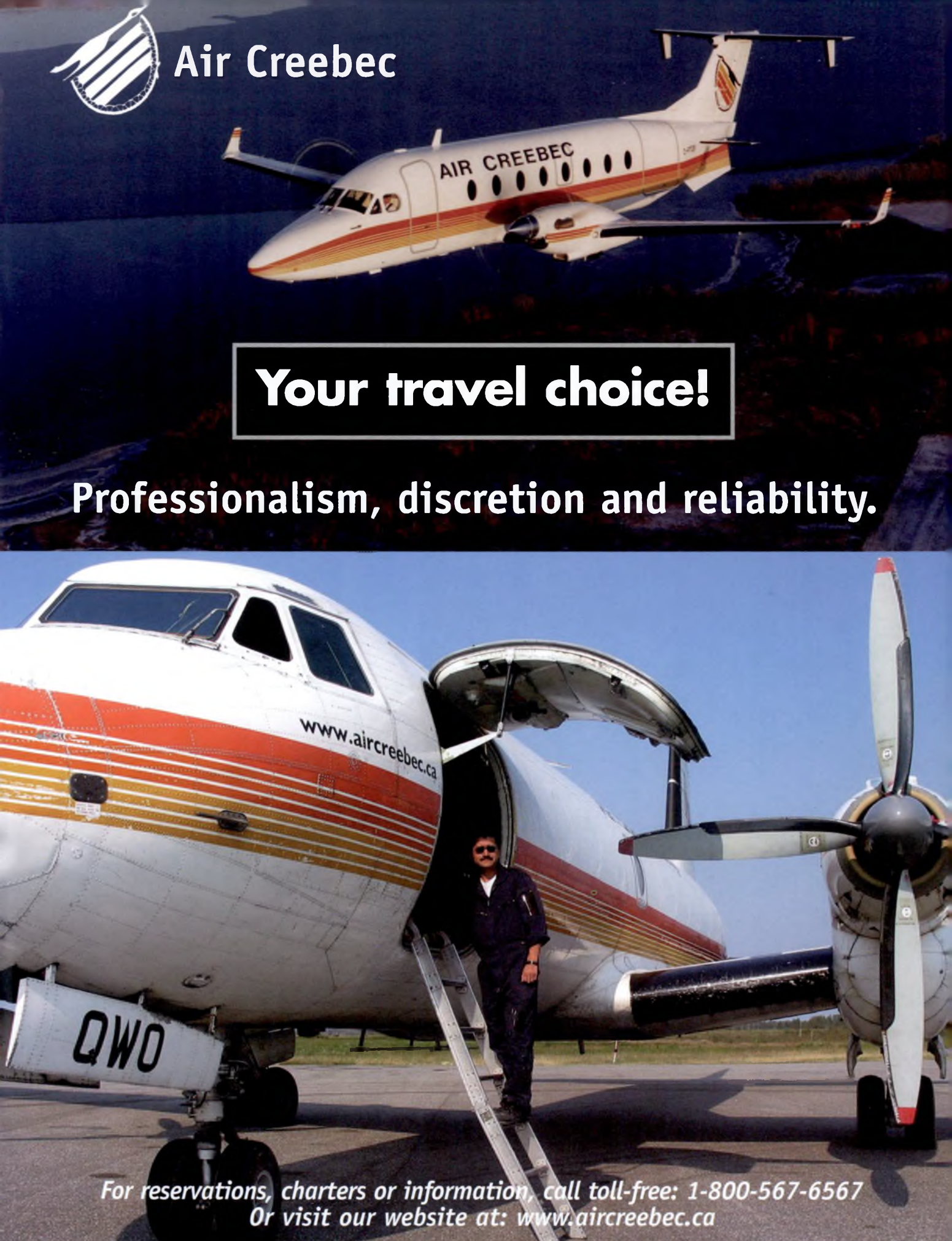
Gambling: help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 (www.info-reference.qc.ca)

S.O.S. Conjugal Violence: 1-800-363-9010 (www.sosviolenceconjugale.com)

Health and Sexuality resources center: 1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm) (www.criss.org)

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688. (www.nwsm.info)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March 3-4-5 Wemindji • March 17-18-19 Mistissini • March 25-26-27 Ouje-Bougoumou
April 14-15-16 Nemaska • April 21-22-23 Waswanipi • May 20-21-22 Waskaganish
June 2-3-4 Eastmain • June 5-6-7 Whapmagoostui • June 9-10-11 Chisasibi

PARENTING WORKSHOPS
COMING BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Open to everyone:
parents, future parents, single parents, grandparents.

presented by **Mervin and Carol Anne Cheechoo**

To help our children reach their full potential
– to be all that they can and should be.

"I know that it is never too late to reach your children."

"Very powerful. Now I'm going to go home and hug my children and tell them that I love them."

"It was excellent because you lift me up and I didn't know what to do anymore with my children."

Quotes from the parents at last year's workshop.

Rev. Mervin Cheechoo and his wife Carol Anne are originally from Moose Factory, Ontario. They have been blessed with three children: Jonathan, Kari and Jordan. Parenting their three children has been and continues to be a priority in their lives. Mervin and Carol Anne strongly believe that our communities will become strong and healthy as our families grow stronger and healthier.

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